(c) in what way will CBDT design a return form which will be simple to fill and people friendly;

(d) what are the reasons for the CBDT creating difficulties for the lowest rung Income Tax assessees; and

(e) the steps proposed to simplify all forms and refund procedures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. For the assessment year 2007-08, Government have prepared eight return forms under a new series (ITR-1 to ITR-8), proposed to be notified on 14.5.2007. The return forms have been designed keeping in view the source of income of different categories of tax-payers and the suggestions received from different quarters. The return forms are intended to be simpler than the return forms notified in the past. All forms (except Form No. 7) have been made amenable to electronic filing. The Form No. 2F now being used will be removed.

Further, the procedure relating to refunds has been simplified. A number of tax-payer friendly initiatives like Electronic Clearing Service (ECS) and 'Refund Banker Scheme' have been introduced.

The Government is committed to providing a simple and pro-compliance tax system. Therefore, wherever any feed back is received about undue burden or any kind of harassment, immediate steps are taken to redress tax-payers' grievances.

Micro Finance Development and Equity Fund of NABARD

4374. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Micro Finance Development and Equity Fund of NABARD;

(b) if so, what is the current amount in the fund; and

(c) the details of loans and grants given from this fund to NGOs, Micro Finance Organisation and Micro Finance Institutions etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The "Micro Finance Development Fund (MFDF)" was set up in National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) during the year 2000-01 with an initial amount of Rs. 100 crores (with contribution of Rs. 40 crore each from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and NABARD and Rs. 20 crore from 11 Commercial Banks). The MFDF has been re-designated as "Micro Finance Development and Equity Fund (MFDEF)" and its fund size enhanced to Rs. 200 crore in the Union Budget announcement for 2005-06. The balance in the fund as on 31 March 2007 is 129.44 crores (provisional figure).

(c) Financial support of Rs. 43.65 crore (as on 31 March, 2007) on a cumulative basis has been provided out of the fund to NGOs, Micro Finance Organisations and Micro Finance Institutions. Of this Rs. 29.14 crore has been provided in the form of grant and the balance Rs. 14.51 crore in the form of soft loan.

Public Expenditure on Health

4375. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under the National Common Minimum Programme, Government have set the target of providing health care access to citizens by raising total public expenditure on health to 2-3 per cent of the GDP;

(b) what was the total public expenditure on Health and Family Welfare as a proportion of GDP in 2004-05 to 2007-08; and

(c) what is the amount of additional resources required to achieve the NCMP target related to public expenditure on health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per Economic Survey 2006-07, the estimate of public expenditure on health during 2004-05 to 2006-07 are as follows: